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Letter dated 27 January 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Cyprus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I wish to express our deep concern about the recent escalation of illegal and provocative activities by the Turkish air force within the Nicosia flight information region (FIR).

In particular, the Turkish air force has significantly escalated its interference with civilian and military aircraft flying through Cyprus's national airspace and the Nicosia FIR. Military radar operators in Turkey and in the occupied area of Cyprus notify aircraft that they are about to enter the purported "TRNC airspace" and warn them either to communicate with "Ercan air control" and alter their route or risk being intercepted by the Turkish air force.

An indicative example of these occurrences took place on 14 November 2013 when an Italian military GLF-3 aircraft, which had obtained a diplomatic flight permit from the competent authorities of the Republic of Cyprus and while performing a routine patrol flight as part of the NATO mission "Active Endeavour", was intercepted by two Turkish F-16 aircraft. The F-16s approached the Italian aircraft at a distance of one nautical mile, thus seriously threatening air safety and navigation.

These actions constitute further attempts to upgrade the so-called "TRNC", by illegally establishing the division of Cyprus's national airspace and the Nicosia FIR, in defiance of international law and the relevant Security Council resolutions. Furthermore, these illegal practices pose serious threats to air safety and navigation and needlessly create additional tension at a particularly sensitive time for the negotiation process.

In the light of the above, Turkey should be called upon to respect international legality, cease all violations and refrain from the harassment of aircraft within the Nicosia FIR.

I should be grateful if you would circulate this letter as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 42, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Nicholas **Emiliou**

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